

## Rural Development Under Secretary Visits Ohio, Addresses Local Development Group

*Secretary Dorr Celebrates Earth Day, Highlights Rural Issues, Recognizes Successful Ohio Business*

Rural Development Under Secretary Tom Dorr visited Ohio April 20-21 to help celebrate Earth Day and serve as keynote speaker at the Eastern Ohio Development Alliance's (EODA) Annual Meeting.

EODA's meeting attracted more than 250 community and local development leaders whose focus is to bring increased economic success to the 16 rural communities within their servicing region.

Also attending the EODA meeting were U.S. Sen. George Voinovich and his wife Janet and Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Co-chairperson Anne Pope.

Secretary Dorr's message was crafted around the concept of change and how embracing it would position rural communities to be successful in their pursuit of economic success.

Secretary Dorr talked about the current worldwide energy situation and identified energy (America's energy policy) as being a timely example of needed change. He said reducing our energy



*USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr, addresses business and community leaders at the Eastern Ohio Development Alliance's (EODA) Annual Meeting during his April 21 Ohio visit. Secretary Dorr also participated in an Earth Day celebration highlighting the Village of Stone Creek.*

dependence was critical, and highlighted Rural Development's investment in emerging energy technologies as a tool to help bring about change. "Fully developing these technologies will help drive change," Dorr said.

He discussed the "rural work ethic" and the choice many people are making to live in rural, rather than urban communities. These and other dynamics are putting additional pressures on rural communities to provide more comprehensive quality of life services. Dorr

wrapped up by targeting the need for Broadband and the connectivity it brings to rural communities as the next change phase. He said this will happen one business, one family, one community at a time through solid local oriented decision-making processes.

During Dorr's visit he participated in EODA's Annual Excellence Awards presentations. Three businesses were recognized for their efforts. See a listing of recipients below.

**(See Excellence on p. 3)**

# Rural Development Celebrates Earth Day Project in Tuscarawas County

USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr, joined State Director Randy Hunt, Tuscarawas County leadership and residents to celebrate a \$3.2 million Earth Day project April 21, 2006.

Strong odors and poor stream quality dictated the need for the new sewer system. Individual systems had leaking septic tanks and there is direct discharge into Stone Creek. The Tuscarawas County Health Department declared the situation a health hazard that required immediate remedy.

Rural Development's funding of the Tuscarawas County project includes a \$1.2 million loan and \$730,000 in grants. Total Rural Development

financing for the project is \$1.9 million. Additional contributors to the financing package are the Ohio Public Works Commission with \$650,000 and the Ohio Department of Development adding \$500,000. The new treatment plant will serve 93 residential users in the Village of Stone Creek and a small portion of Jefferson Township.



*USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr (center), presents a financing check to Village of Stone Creek Mayor Jim Wherley (right) as Tuscarawas County Commissioner Kerry Metzger looks on.*

## Broadband Conference Galvanizes Rural Focus *Widespread Interest Generates More Than 250 Participants*



*Rural Development Rural Utilities Program Administrator James Andrew (standing at podium), addresses a group of more than 250 community and telecommunications leaders during his April 18 visit to Ohio. Andrew was the keynote speaker at Ohio's Statewide Broadband Conference.*

U.S. Sen. Mike DeWine and Ohio's USDA Rural Development office sponsored a statewide Telecommunications Conference focusing on improving Broadband accessibility for Ohio's rural communities. The conference is a part of a national \$2 billion initiative designed to increase development and deployment of Broadband technology throughout America's rural communities.

"We've been looking in depth at this issue and are committed to assembling the resources, professional networks and community leaders," said Senator DeWine.

"Working with Rural Development to sponsor this conference helps highlight available funding, improve technological awareness and explain program assistance."

The Broadband Program provides loans and loan guarantees for the cost of construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment for broadband service in eligible rural communities. More than 50 applications have been approved nationally totaling more than \$824 million.

The approval process has become more efficient and

**(See Broadband on p. 4)**

# Rural Development Announces \$20 Million for Distance Learning Telemedicine Program

Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr announced the availability of \$20 million in grants to rural communities to strengthen distance learning and telemedicine (DLT) programs in rural America.

“The specialized health care and enhanced educational opportunities brought by modern technologies saves lives and promotes opportunities essential to the advancement of rural areas,” said Dorr. “USDA Rural Development’s funding for distance learning and telemedicine will help to bring technology into rural America to build strong and vibrant communities.”

Telemedicine technology makes it possible for doctors to examine and direct the treatment of patients without being physically present. The distance learning program finances equipment to expand educational resources to students and educational institutions in isolated rural areas. Since the beginning of the Bush Administration,

over \$177 million has been invested in local distance learning and telemedicine programs, allowing 3,635 rural educational facilities to expand their access to modern telecommunications technology, and 1,650 health care institutions to develop technologies needed to enhance local medical care.

“Ohio has maintained a steady success rate in accessing this program,” said Ohio Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt. “Last year we received more than \$480,000 in two DLT grant awards. Combined with our grants received since the beginning of the Bush administration Ohio has tapped the DLT program for more than \$2 million.”

Applications for the \$20 million in grants must be received by June 12, 2006 and will compete nationally for funding. View <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> for additional information on the distance learning and telemedicine program.

Excellence cont. from p. 1

## EODA Excellence Award Winners



### Large Manufacturing Award Colfor Manufacturing, Inc.

Colfor Manufacturing, Inc.  
Plant Manager Tom Szymanski (at podium) accepts EODA’s Manufacturing Excellence Award. Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr (right) and State Director Randy Hunt are seated. Colfor has three Ohio plants and manufacturers drive trains for vehicles.



### Tourism Award Buckeye Trail Association

Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr (right), presents EODA’s Tourism Excellence Award to Chris Copeland, Harrison County CIC director and Russ Johnson, Board of Directors for Buckeye Trail Association. More than 1,200 members maintain the 1,435-mile Buckeye Trail.



### Tourism Award John & Annie Glenn Historic Site

Under Secretary for Rural Development Tom Dorr (right), presents EODA’s Tourism Excellence Award to Kelly Ashby, Zanesville/ Muskingham County Chamber of Commerce and Debbie Allender, director of the John & Annie Glenn Historic Site.

# Rural Development Funds \$1.1 Million Clinic Expansion, Equipment Purchase

Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt joined local leaders and officials from Family Healthcare to celebrate an Open House event in McArthur, Ohio.

The event was in recognition of Rural Development financing that helped double the available clinic space while adding space for a new dental clinic. This is the only modern dental clinic in Vinton County.

More than \$1 million was contributed by Rural Development, the Appalachian Region Commission added \$216,620 and Family Healthcare, Inc supplied \$58,380.



**Family Healthcare Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**



## Broadband cont. from p. 2



*U.S. Senator Mike DeWine (center) is presented a plaque by Rural Utilities Program Administrator James Andrew (right) and Ohio Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt (left) for his commitment to Ohio's Rural residents and his co-sponsorship of the April 18 Ohio Broadband Conference.*

conference helps to educate rural community leaders and service providers, and facilitate their understanding of the economic and quality of life benefits access to this technology provides.”

involves approximately four months from initial application to final committee approval.

“This is one of the key program servicing areas Rural Development wants to focus on,” said Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt. “Rural communities represent areas that are comparatively underserved by Broadband high-speed internet. We hope this

## OHIO SOYBEAN COUNCIL MEETING



*Rural Development Under Secretary Tom Dorr (center) and Rural Development Ohio State Director Randy Hunt (left) meet with Jamie Mossbarger from the Ohio Soybean Council (right) during the Secretary's April 21 Ohio visit. The meeting was part of Rural Development's active commitment to the Bush administration's Energy Policy. Rural Development contributes to the goals of the Energy Policy by nationally funding the pursuit of alternative energy sources through its myriad of programs.*